

## **Citizen's Participation Plan**

The Consolidated Plan is a comprehensive planning document that discusses Norfolk's community development and housing needs, with particular emphasis on providing decent housing, creating suitable living environments, enhancing the city's economic viability, and expanding economic opportunities for low and very low income persons. It includes an assessment of Norfolk's housing and homeless needs, analysis of the housing market, a three to five year strategic plan that addresses priority concerns, and a one year action plan that allocates available federal resources in support of the plan. The Annual Action Plan allocates funds for four programs, three in which the City of Norfolk participates. These programs are the Community Development Block Grant, the Emergency Shelter Grant, the Home Investment Partnership and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with Aids. A brief description of these programs can be found at the end of this document.

The goal of the consolidated planning process is a unified vision for community development actions. Obtaining citizen views on housing and community development needs in the city is a key part of the defining that vision. The City of Norfolk has prepared and adopted a citizen participation plan that provides for citizen input through the consolidated planning process.

This document describes the citizen participation processes for the development and implementation of the Consolidated Plan. It further details the amendment process for changes in the Consolidated Plan as well as the processes and procedures associated with the implementation of activities funded through the Consolidated Plan. It also describes the citizen participation process as it applies to the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program.

The Consolidated Plan is a multi-year document, covering a five-year time frame. It contains an action plan that is prepared annually. The Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER). The plan development procedures detailed below apply to the preparation of the five-year plan and the annual plan. The performance assessment procedures are identified separately. The steps in the plan development process are outlined below.

### **Open Forum and Proposal/Project Submissions**

The Consolidated Plan Open Forum initiates the process. It is the first public hearing. Citizens are invited to identify housing and community development needs, and to comment on past performance. This information is used for plan development and reassessment. The Consolidated Plan Open Forum will be held by the City Planning Commission. Persons may speak at the Open Forum, submit ideas in writing, or contact identified staff.

During this time, the City will receive requests for organizational financial assistance for program implementation under the Community Development Block Grant, Emergency Shelter Grant, and HOME Investment Partnership funds. This information must be submitted in a specified format by the published deadline. Proposals that do not clearly provide requested major elements would not receive funding consideration.

### **Initial Plan Development**

Based upon comments, suggestions, and proposals received through the Open Forum and related processes, the Consolidated Plan Work Group and the Advisory Group will develop a

recommended Consolidated Plan, including the Annual Action Plan. The Consolidated Plan Work Group consists of staff representatives from City departments and agencies that can speak to the housing needs of lower income households and community development. Staff representatives from the following departments: Human Services, Norfolk Community Services Board, Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, and the Department of Planning and Community Development, coordinate the process.

All comments received and all requests for funding received will be discussed with the Advisory Group and the City of Norfolk Planning Commission. The Citizen Advisory Group is composed of representatives of organizations and agencies that support or advocate for low income groups or areas affected by public actions. The participating organizations are: City of Norfolk Planning Commission, Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Endependence Center, Norfolk Resident Organization, Norfolk Homeless Coalition, Empowerment Zone 2010, Norfolk Federation of Civic Leagues, Inner City Federation of Civic Leagues, Church Street/Huntersville Task Force, Ocean View Task Force, and the Southside Task Force.

The Citizen Advisory Group will be invited to attend the Open Forum. This group works with staff to develop the draft Consolidated Plan. This includes developing the draft that contains an assessment of housing and community needs, the strategic plan, and the action plan or budgets. The draft plan is a staff recommendation to the City Planning Commission. The Advisory Group will forward its comments on the staff recommended draft plan to the Commission.

A copy of this recommended program will be distributed to all those persons who participated in the development stages and who submitted suggestions, as well as to branch libraries and neighborhood centers. If the package is of considerable size, a detailed summary of the proposal including budgets will be provided instead. Copies of the draft plan will also be available on diskette if requested. All persons and groups receiving this information will be advised as to the processing schedule of the draft program, including the date of the City Planning commission public hearing and the 30 day notice period.

### **City Planning Commission Public Hearing**

The second public hearing will be held on the staff recommended Consolidated Plan/Annual Plan. Public Service projects considered at the City of Norfolk Planning Commission public hearing are limited to those submitted according to the guidelines and time-tables outlined in this package. The City of Norfolk Planning Commission (CPC), appointed by the City Council, represents interests throughout the City of Norfolk. The involvement of the CPC in this effort takes advantage of both the broad representations of the group and its work in providing guidance to City Council on a wide and varied range of elements crucial to Norfolk's development. Included among these tasks is its extensive participation in the neighborhood planning and development process. The City of Norfolk Planning Commission will review the recommended program in light of its policies and objectives, and the comments received. Following its hearing and its deliberations, the City Planning Commission will forward its recommendation to City Council.

### **City Council Public Hearing**

The City of Norfolk Planning Commission's recommendation is the basis of the third public hearing, which is held by City Council. Projects that are considered at the City Council public

hearings are limited to those submitted according to the guidelines and outlined within this Citizen Participation Plan. As the elected representatives of the citizens of the City of Norfolk, City Council adds its knowledge and influence regarding ongoing and planned public programs and activities to the process. This comprehensive view contributes to the development of a Consolidated Plan/Annual Plan that enhances movement toward the acknowledged goals and vision for the city.

The action of City Council adopts the Consolidated Plan/Annual Plan, which finalizes all budgets. Upon completion of the process, the City will forward the adopted Consolidated Plan to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. After action on the application by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, the City will publish a notice in a general circulation newspaper. This notice will advise that the application has been submitted to the Department of Housing and Urban Development and is available to interested parties upon request.

In summary, the plan development procedures of the City of Norfolk provide citizens many opportunities to express their views on community development and housing needs, and the programs and activities proposed to meet those needs. There is citizen participation throughout the process, including the three scheduled public hearings.

### **Consultation with Other Agencies**

The inclusion of the Advisory Group provides for consistent consultation with public and private agencies that provide assisted housing, health services, and social services during the preparation of the Consolidated Plan. In addition, the draft plan will be discussed with the Human Services Council during the thirty-day comment period. The Health Department will be consulted in the analysis of lead-based paint hazard in housing and in the development of a strategy to address this problem. Copies of the Consolidated Plan will be distributed to adjacent units of local government and the state. The local public housing authority has representation on the Advisory Group and in the staff work group. Consultation on public housing needs and the Comprehensive Grant program is a part of the process.

### **Participation of Low Income Groups and Affected Persons**

In addition to the efforts to notify the general public of the Consolidated Plan Open Forum, special actions will be taken to insure that those groups most directly affected by its programs, low-and moderate-income persons and residents of blighted areas, will be adequately informed. Actions designed to provide adequate information will include announcements of the Open Forum in the Project Area Committee (PAC) newsletters of ongoing conservation and redevelopment projects and the distribution of the Open Forum brochure and other pertinent information to all known civic leagues Project Area Committees, and neighborhood groups in the City.

The continuing participation of these groups in this process is assured by the composition of the Citizen Advisory Group. The Norfolk Residents Organization represents residents of public housing. The Inner City Federation of Civic Leagues, Church Street/Huntersville Task Force, Ocean View Task Force, and the Southside Task Force provide representation for areas likely to be impacted by public actions.

## Public Notice

### Open Forum Notice

Information on the Consolidated Plan Open Forum will be widely distributed. Advertisements regarding the Open Forum detailing the date, time, place, amount of funds available to the City, and range of activities eligible for funding, and the deadline for the submission of request will be placed in a general circulation newspaper fifteen (15) business days prior to the hearing. These announcements will also advise the public of the availability of a brochure placed in all branch libraries and neighborhood centers fifteen (15) business days prior to the Open Forum which will provide information describing the:

- Amount of funds available to the City from entitlement and program income sources, if known,
- Range of activities eligible for funding,
- The amount of funds proposed for activities that will benefit low and moderate income people;
- The proposed activities likely to result in displacement:
- Plans for minimizing displacement:
- Assistance available to displacees:
- Previously funded CDBG activities
- Role of citizens in the Community Development process
- Process by which the application will be approved,
- Date, time, place, accessibility to the handicapped
- Procedures of the Open Forum, including the deadline and application format for the submission of requests for funding

The brochure will also include a response sheet on which to submit written suggestions for those persons unable to attend the Open Forum. When possible, the local broadcast media will be provided public service announcements regarding the Open Forum and the availability of information.

### Notice of Draft Plan Availability (Planning Commission Public Hearing)

A notice of availability of the draft Consolidated/Annual Plan will be placed in a general circulation newspaper. A summary of plan resources expected to be available, and activities recommended for funding will be included in the notice. The notice will also identify locations where complete copies of the plan may be viewed or attained. The thirty -day comment period will be noted as well as the date, time, and location of the City Planning Commission's public hearing on the recommend plan. The advertisement will also include the amount of funds designated to benefit low and moderate-income persons, and accessibility to the handicapped. The opportunity to comment on past performance will also be noted. Efforts will also be made to inform citizens of the public hearing through the local broadcast media. Persons or organizations submitting requests for funding will be individually notified of these public hearings.

### Notice of City Council Public Hearing

Notice of the hearing will appear in the general circulation newspaper fifteen (15) business days prior to the hearing. The advertisement will state the date, time, place, a summary of the draft

plan including the proposed use of funds, and accessibility to the handicapped. The ad will also include the amount of funds designated to benefit low and moderate-income persons. The opportunity to comment on past performance will also be noted. Efforts will also be made to inform citizens of the public hearing through the local broadcast media. Persons or organizations submitting requests for funding will be individually notified of these public hearings.

### **Program Implementation**

Citizen involvement in the program implementation phases of the Consolidated Plan will take place at both the neighborhood and citywide level. At the neighborhood level, those groups in areas where Consolidated Plan activities are being implemented will serve a strong advisory role in the prioritization of needs and expenditures of funds. Through the regular meetings of the neighborhood groups, whether a Redevelopment and Conservation Project Area Committees or neighborhood Planning and Coordinating Committees, the continual exchange of information about the stated neighborhood objectives and the planned program will insure a level of citizen input sufficient to affect program implementation. Citywide citizen participation in the program implementation phase will be the responsibility of the City of Norfolk Planning Commission. The City of Norfolk Planning Commission at its regularly scheduled meetings will review those activities included in the Consolidated/Annual Plan and offer input and guidance in the implementation stages.

### **Assessment of Performance**

In addition to encouraging comments on program performance at the Open Forum another means of assessing performance under the Consolidated Plan is through the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER). Contents of the report will include the progress on planned activities, an assessment of the effectiveness of the program in meeting objectives, progress in providing housing assistance, status of environmental reviews, and information regarding the City's compliance with equal opportunity and citizen participation standards. The Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report will be made available to citizens for a (15) day comment period prior to its submission to the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Comments received will be summarized and attached to the CAPER. After submission, the public will be advised as to the plan's availability.

In addition, all records pertaining to the City of Norfolk's Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report are available for public review during business hours in the Department of Planning and Community Development, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 508, City Hall Building, Norfolk, Virginia. These records include contracting procedures, environmental policies, fair housing and other equal opportunity requirements, and relocation provisions.

### **Consolidated Plan Amendments**

The City of Norfolk will amend its final statement when one or more of the following occur:

- ☐ A change in allocation priorities or a change in the method of distribution of funds;
- ☐ An activity using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan including program income, not previously described in the action plan;

A change to the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity:

- ❑ A 25% change in the use of Community Development Block Grant funds from one eligible activity to another.

A (30) thirty day comment period will be held on the proposed amendment. A summary of the proposed amendment will be placed in a general circulation newspaper. Proposed actions to amend the City's Consolidated Plan to meet the requirements as prescribed will be reviewed by the Citizen Advisory Group and the City Planning Commission. Upon review, each will forward comments on the proposed reprogramming to the City Council.

A public hearing on the proposed amendment will be held by City Council to solicit citizen views on the proposal. Public notices will be placed in local general circulation newspapers fifteen (15) days prior to the hearing describing the time, date, place and topic of the hearing. In addition, efforts will be made to contact neighborhood groups and Project Area Committees.

If the amendment is adopted by City Council, the amendment will be made public. The Department of Housing and Urban Development will be notified of the amendment.

## Complaints

All citizen complaints pertaining to the City's Consolidated Plan program will be processed under the authority of the Department of Planning and Community Development, provided that the Director certifies in writing to the complainant that neither he nor his department has a conflict of interest. If the Department of Planning and Community Development cannot so certify, the City Manager shall appoint an alternative investigator who has no conflict of interest. Pursuant to the Consolidated Plan as amended by the Fair Housing Amendments regulations, complaints shall be answered in a timely and responsible manner. The following procedure shall be adhered to:

- ❑ Complaints received by the City of Norfolk will be referred immediately to the Department of Planning and Community Development for review.
- ❑ An investigation of the complaint will be conducted, including seeking responsible sources of information and reviewing relevant statutes and regulations.
- ❑ Within fifteen (15) working days of the City of Norfolk's receipt of the complaint, a written response will be forwarded to the complainant addressing each specific issue raised in the complaint.

Every effort will be made to achieve the resolution of all complaints within thirty (30) days of their receipt by the City of Norfolk.

The above procedure refers to complaints other than those dealing with housing or program discrimination covered by Federal civil rights laws such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, of 1988. Section 109 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other Federal Civil Rights Statutes as well as Executive Order 11063. Complaints alleging discrimination will be forwarded directly to the HUD Regional Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, 105.S. 7<sup>th</sup> Street Liberty Square Building, Philadelphia, PA 11106-3392 for appropriate processing since the City of Norfolk is not empowered to investigate such complaints.

**Sources of Information**

In an effort to maintain a high degree of citizen participation the City's Consolidated Plan, approved applications, Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Reports, and the Citizen Participation Plan will be available at the following locations:

Department of Planning and Community Development  
810 Union Street, Room 508  
Norfolk, VA 23508

Kirn Memorial Library  
301 E. City Hall Avenue  
Norfolk, VA

**SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAM**

To the extent possible, the citizen participation process of the Section 108 Loan Program will parallel the process of the Consolidated Plan. However, the special nature of this program requires adjustments to that process to meet program needs.

**Application Development**

The City of Norfolk annually provides the opportunity for its citizens to identify housing and community development needs. This occurs through the public hearing, known as the Open Forum, which is described in detail earlier in this document. As the Open Forum is an annual activity, the most recent forum will serve as the housing and community development needs public hearing for a Section 108 Grant application.

An application for a Section 108 loan may be generated in response to needs and concepts identified through the Open Forum as well as ongoing City operations. An application may be submitted at any time during the year deemed appropriate by the City Council.

A request to the city to apply for a Section 108 loan must provide sufficient information to enable an informed response on that loan. It must be in writing, which sufficient project information to determine costs, beneficiaries, and project's ability to satisfy federal requirements. City staff will provide general guidance on the preparation of the request. All requests will receive a written response from the City Manager's Office on the disposition of the request.

**Application Processing**

A proposed application will be developed by the pertinent parties describing the activities to be carried out with the loan funds. It will also describe the national objectives to be met, amount of guaranteed funds expected to be used, the location of the project, and any program income expected to be generated.

The proposed application will be presented to the Norfolk City Planning Commission for review. The Commission will forward a recommendation to the City Council.

The Norfolk City Council will hold a public hearing on the proposed application. Notice of the hearing will appear in the general circulation newspapers fifteen (15) days prior to the hearing.

The announcement will state the date, time, place, and topic of the public hearing and accessibility to the handicapped. The advertisement will also include activities to be undertaken, the amount of funds expected to be available in the upcoming year, program income expected to be generated, the amount of funds designated to benefit low and moderate income persons, activities which will result in displacement, plans for minimizing displacement, and assistance to be provided displacees. These announcements will also advise the public of the availability of the proposed application placed in all branch libraries and neighborhood centers fifteen (15) days prior to the hearing.

The City Council public hearing will generally be held in the Council Chambers in Norfolk City Hall. This is a well known location that is handicapped accessible. For each Section 108 loan application, an assessment of the accessibility of the location to potential and actual program beneficiaries will be made and documented to the file. If a determination is made that alternative arrangements are necessary to meet federal requirements, then such arrangements will be made.

Special public information meetings, supportive of the City Council public hearing, will be held by city staff if determined necessary for potential or actual project beneficiaries. This determination will be based on the type, impact, and location of the project as well as the characteristics of the potential or actual beneficiaries.

### **Assessment of Performance**

As the Open Forum provides the opportunity for the public to comment on past performance under the Consolidated Plan, it will also provide that opportunity for the Section 108 program. Applicable federal requirements relative to the Annual Grantee Performance report will also be followed.

### **Complaints**

The process described above for the resolution of Consolidated Plan complaints will apply.

### **Amendments**

The City of Norfolk will amend its Section 108 final statement when one or more of the following occur:

- a) a new project or activity not previously included is undertaken;
- b) a project or activity included in the statement is not carried out; or
- c) the project is substantially changed. Substantially changed is defined as any change in project scale and function that directly affects the value of the Section 108 loan by 15% or more.

### **Sources of Information**

Information with respect to a Section 108 application shall be maintained in the Department of Planning and Community Development, 810 Union Street, Room 508, Norfolk, VA 23508.

### **Citizen Participation Plan Amendments**



Citizens have the opportunity to comment on substantial amendments to the Citizen Participation Plan. A public notice describing the change will appear in a general circulation newspaper. A 15-day comment period will be established. Comments may be in writing or oral. Proposed changes will be discussed with the Advisory group and the City Planning commission. Plan amendments will be approved by the City Manager, in consultation with City Council.

## **Attachment**

### **Program Descriptions**

Below are brief descriptions of the Community Development Block Grant, the Emergency Shelter Grant Program, the HOME Investment Partnership Program, and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program.

#### **Community Development Block Grant Program**

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, has as its primary objective the development of viable urban communities through the provision of decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income. Grant recipients must certify that their use of funds will address one of three broad objectives – benefit low and moderate families (specifically, 70% of the grant funds must benefit low and moderate income persons), aid in the elimination of slums and blight, or meet urgent needs which pose a serious threat to the health or welfare of a community.

#### **HOME Investment Partnership Program**

The HOME program was created under Title II of the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990. The general purposes of HOME are expanding the supply of decent and affordable housing, particularly rental housing, for low and very low income Americans; strengthening the abilities of State and local governments to design and implement strategies for achieving adequate supplies of decent affordable housing; providing financial and technical assistance to participating jurisdictions; extending and strengthening partnerships among all levels of government and the private sector, including for profit and nonprofit organizations, in the production and operating of affordable housing.

#### **Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA)**

The program is designed to provide States and localities with the resources and incentives to devise long-term comprehensive strategies for meeting the housing needs of persons with AIDS and related diseases and their families.

#### **Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) Program**

Authorized under Title IV of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by the Housing and Community Development Act 1992, this program is designed to help improve the quality of existing emergency shelters for the homeless, to make available additional emergency shelters, to meet the costs of operating emergency shelters, and of providing essential social services to homeless individuals, and to help prevent homelessness.